

A
WEDDING
Ring

Fit for the
FINGER:

Or, the salve of
DIVINITY
On the sore of
HUMANITY.

Laid open in a Sermon at *Edmon-*
ton, by *William Secker* Preacher
of the Gospel.

London, Printed for the Authour, onely
to be disposed of to his friends.

WEDDING

Ring

the

TINGER

of the

DIVINITY

On the

HOMANITY

Laid open in a Sermon at Farn-
ham, by William Sackville
of the Gospel.

London, Printed for the Author, only
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Christian Reader,



*T*is not good weighing ones worth in such unequal balances, where the feather of opinion turnes the scales. One spoke can neuer stand still whilest the whole wheel turns round. The gifts and graces of Christians lay in common till envy made the first in

6 The Epistle Dedicatory.

closure. Here thou mayst
shew thy wisdom in spin-
ning a fine thread out of
course wool. Do not hurt
him by thy malice, who would
help thee in thy marriage.
Who would plant a piece of
Ordnance to beat down an aspen
leaf, which having alwayes
the palsie, will fall alone ?
This piece neither desires sup-
planters, nor deserves suppor-
ters. It comes forth as a
pressed Souldier, not as a Vo-
lunteer, what it was in prea-
ching, it is in publishing ;
There is not one cubit added
to its stature, to secure
it from the Avenger of
blood, it flies to thy City
of

The Epistle Dedicatory. 7

of refuge. Let him who
sowes his paines, reap thy
prayers.

Thine in the Lord Jesus

William Secker.

A 4

GEN.

7 The Epistle Dedicatory.

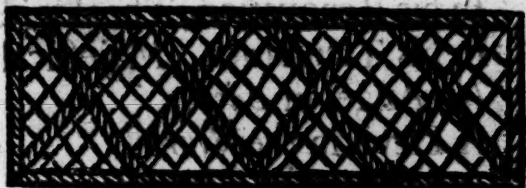
of which the first copy
was made by the
author.

Printed in the Lord's House

William Widdowes.

CHM

A 4



Gen. 2. 18.

*And the Lord God said, it is not
good that the man should be
alone, I will make him a help
meet for him.*



Umane misery is to
divine mercy, as a
black foile to a
sparkling Diamond,
or as a sable cloud to
the Sunne-beames,

*Psal. 43. 3. Lord what is man, that
thou art mindful of him! man
is,*

In his Creation, Angelical.

In

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In his Corruption, Diabolical.
 In his Renovation, Theological.
 In his Translation, Majestical.
 An Angel in *Eden*.
 A Devil in the World.
 A Saint in the Church.
 A King in Heaven.

There were foure silver Channels in which the chrystal streames of Gods affection ran to man in his Creation.

1. In his Preparation.
2. In his Assimilation.
3. In his Coronation.
4. In his Association.

1. In his *preparation* : Other creatures recieved the Charter of their beings by a simple *fiat*, but there was a consultation at his forming ; not for the difficulty, but for the dignity of the work. The Painter is most studious about that which he means to make his Master-piece. The foure Elements were taken out of their Elements

to make up the perfection of mans complexion; The fire was purifi'd, the aire was clarifi'd, the water was purged, the earth was refined, when man was moulded, heaven and earth was married; a body from the one was espoused to a soul from the other.

2. In his *assimilation*: Other creatures were made like themselves, but man was made like God, as the wax hath the impression of the seal set upon it. It's admirable to behold so faire a picture in such course canvas, and so bright a Character in such a brown paper.

3. In his *coronation*: He that made man and all the rest, made man over all the rest. *Quantillum Dominum posuit, Deus in tantum dominum*, he was a little Lord of a great Lordship; This King was crowned in his cradle.

4. In his *association*: Society is the

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the solace of humanity : The world would be a desert without a consort.

Most of mens parts are made in paires ; now he that was double in his perfection, must not be single in his condition, *and the Lord God said, &c.*

These words are like the Iron-gate that opened to *Peter* of it's own accord, dividing themselves into three parts.

1. An introduction: *and the Lord God said.*

2. An assertion, 'tis not good that the man, &c.

3. A determination, *I will make, &c.*

In the first, there's a Majesty proposed.

In the second, there's a malady presented.

In the third, there's a remedy provided.

Once more let me put these grapes into the presse. 1. The

1. The Sovereignnesse of the expression, *and the Lord God said.*

2. The solitarinesse of the condition, *'tis not good, &c.*

3. The futablenesse of the provision, *I will make, &c.*

In the first, there's the worth of veracity.

In the second, there's the want of society.

In the third, there's the work of divinity.

Of these in their order.

For the first. The Sovereignnesse of the expression, *and the Lord God said.*

Luke 1. 70. As he spake by the mouth of his Prophets. In other Scriptures he used their mouths, but in this he makes use of his own: they were the Organs, and he the Breath; the early streames, and he the Fountain. How he spake 'tis hard to be spoken, whether

Bern.

ther eternally, or internally, or externally. *Quomodo non est quod quaeramus, sed potius quid dixerit intelligamus,* we are not to enquire to the manner of speaking, but to the matter that's spoken, which leads me like a directing starre from the Suburbs to the City, from the Porch to the Palace, from the Founder of the Mine, to the Treasure that is in it, *it is not good, &c.*

In which you have two things.

1. The subject.

2. The predicate.

The subject, *man alone.*

The predicate, *'tis not good, &c.*

First, the subject, *man alone*, take this in two branches.

1. As it is limited to one man.

2. As it is lengthened to all men.

First,

First, as 'tis limited to one man, and so it is taken particularly, man for the first man. When all other creatures had their mates, *Adam* wanted his: Though he was the Emperour of the Earth, and the Admiral of the Seas, yet in Paradise without a companion, though he was truly happy, yet he was not fully happy; Though he had enough for his board, yet he had not enough for his bed; Though he had many creatures to serve him, yet he wanted a creature to solace him; when he was compounded in Creation, he must be compleated by conjunction; when he had no sinne to hurt him, then he must have a wife to help him; *It is not good that man should be alone.*

Secondly, as it's lengthned to all men, and so it's taken universally, *Heb. 13. 4. Marriage is honorable unto all*, not only *usque*, but

but ~~not~~. It's not onely warrantable, but honourable. The whole Trinity hath conspired together to set a Crown of glory upon the head of Matrimony.

1. God the Father: Marriage was a Tree planted within the walls of Paradise, this flower first grew in Gods garden.

2. The Sonne: Marriage is a christall glasse wherein Christ and the Saints do see each others faces.

3. The Holy Ghost by his overshadowing of the blessed Virgin. Well might the world when it saw her pregnancie, suspect her Virginitie, but her Matrimonial condition was a grave to that suspition, without this, her innocence had not prevented her infamy; she needed a shield to defend that chastity as broad, which was kept inviolable at home.

Too many have not worth enough to preserve their virginity, have yet will enough to cover their unchastity; turning the medicine of frailty into the mantle of filthiness. Certainly she is mad that cuts off her legge to get her a crutch, or that venomes her face to weare a mask.

Saint *Paul* makes it one of the Characters of those that should cashier the faith, 1 *Tim.* 4. 3. Not to forbear marriage which may be lawful, but to forbid it which is sinful.

One of the Popes of *Rome*, sprinkles this unholy drop upon it, *carnis pollutionem & immunditiem.*

It's strange, that that should be a pollution, which was instituted before corruption; or that impurity, which was ordained in the state of innocency; or that they should make that to be a sinne
B which

which they make to be a Sacrament.

But a Bastard may be laid at the door of chastity ; and a leaden crown set upon a golden head.

Bellarmino that mighty *Atlas* of the Papal power blowes his stinking breath upon it, saying, better were it for a Priest to defile himself with many Harlots, than to be married to one wife. These children of the purple-whore preferre their Monasteries before our Marriages ; a concubine before a companion. They use too many for their lusts, to choose any for their love ; Their tables are so largely spread, that they can't feed upon one dish.

As for their exalting of a Virginate, it's like him that commended fasting when he had fill'd his belly.

Who knowes not that Virginity is a pearle of sparkling lustre ? But
can't

can't the one be set up, without the other be thrown down? will no oblation pacifie the former, but the demolishing of the latter? Though we find many enemies to the choice of marriage, yet it's rare to finde any enemies to the use of marriage. They would pick the lock that want the key, and pluck the fruit that do not plant the Tree.

The Hebrewes have a saying, *He is not a man that hath not a woman.*

Though they clime too high a bough; yet it's to be feared that such flesh is full of imperfection that is not tending to propagation; Though man alone may be good, yet it is not good that the man should be alone; which leads me from the subject to the predicate. *It is not good, &c.*

Non bonum is not in this place as *malum*; but *bonum est honestum utile. iucundum.*

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Now it is not good that man should be in a single condition, upon a threefold consideration.

1. In respect of sinne, which would not else be prevented. Marriage is like water, to quench the sparkes of lusts fire, 1 Cor. 7. 2. *Neverthelesse to avoid fornication, let every one have his own wife, &c.* Man needed no such physick when he was in perfect health. Temptations may break natures best fence and lay it's Paradise waste, but a single life is a prison of unruly desires, which is daily attempted to be broken open.

Some indeed force themselves to a single life meerely to avoid the charges of a married state; they had rather fry in the grease of their own sensuality, than extinguish those flames with an allowed remedy; *It's better to marry, than to burn;* to be lawfully coupled, than

to be lustfully scorched. It's best feeding these flames with ordinate fewel.

2. 'Tis not good in respect of mankinde, which then would not be propagated. The Roman Historian relating the ravishing of the Sabine women, excused it thus: *Res erat unius etatis populus virorum*, without them mankinde would fall from the earth and perish. Marriages do turne mutability into the image of eternity; it springs up new buds, when the old are withered. It's a greater honour for a man to be the father of one sonne, than to be the Master of many servants. Without a wife, children can't be had lawfully; without a good wife children can't be had comfortably. Man and woman as the stock and the science, being grafted in marriage, are trees bearing fruit to the world.

Saint *Augustine* sayes, this
B 3 pair

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pair is, *primum par & fundamentum omnium, &c.*

They are the first linck of humane society to which all the rest are joyned. Mankinde had long ago decayed and been like a Taper fall'n into the socket, if those breaches which are made by mortality were not repaired by Matrimony.

3. 'Tis not good in regard of the Church, which could not then have been expatiated. Where there is no generation, there can be no regeneration:

Nature makes us Creatures, before Grace makes us Christians.

If the loines of men had been lesse fruitfull, the death of Christ would have been lesse successful.

It was a witty question that one put to him that said, marriages fills the earth, but virginity
fills

fills the heavens. How can the heavens be full, if the earth be empty?

Had *Adam* lived in Innocency without Matrimony, there would have been no servants for God in the Church Militant, nor no Saints with God in the Church Triumphant. But I will not sinke this Vessel by the over-burdening of it, nor presse this truth to death by laying too great a load upon its shoulders.

There is one knot which I must untie before I make a farther progresse, 1 *Corinthians* 7. 1. *It is good for a man not to touch a woman.*

Doth all the Scriptures proceed out of the same mouth, and do they not all speak the same truth: the God of unity will not indite discord, and the God of verity cannot assert falsehood. If good and evil be contraries, how contrary then are

these Scriptures? Either *Moses* mistakes God, or *Paul* mistakes *Moses* about the point of marriage.

To which I shall give a double answer.

1. There is a publick and a private good. In respect of one man it may be good not to touch a woman, but in respect of all. So it is not good that the man should be alone.

2. *Moses* speaks of the state of man created, *Paul* of the state of man corrupted: now that which by institution was a mercy, may by corruption become a misery; as pure water is tainted by running through a miry channel; or as the Sunne-beames recieves a tincture by shining through a coloured glasse. There's no print of evil in the world, but sinne was the stamp that made it. They which seek nothing but weal in its commission, will

will finde nothing but woe in the conclusion. Which leades me from the solitarinesse of the condition, *man alone*, to the sutablenesse of the provision, *I will make her an help meet for him.*

In which you have two parts,

1. The Agent, *I will make.*

2. The Object, *a help.*

First, The Agent, *I will make.*

We can't build a house without tooles, but the Trinity is at liberty.

Dic verbum tantum.

To Gods omniscience there's nothing invisible, and to Gods omnipotence there's nothing impossible.

We work by hands without, but he workes without hands. He that made man meet for

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for help, makes a meet help for man.

Marriages are consented above, but consummated below. *Prov.*

18. 22. Though man wants supply, yet man cannot supply his wants. *James* 1. 17. Every

good and perfect gift comes from above, &c.

A wife though she be not a perfect gift, yet she is a good gift.

These beames are darted from the Sunne of righteousness.

Hast thou a soft heart? it's of Gods breaking: Hast thou a sweet wife? shee's of Gods making.

Let me draw up this expression with a double application.

When thou layest out for such a good on earth, look up to the God of heaven.

Let him make thy choice for thee who hath made his choice of thee.

Look above

bove you before you look about you. Nothing makes up the happiness of a married condition like the holiness of a mortified disposition. Account not those the most worthy, that are the most wealthy. Art thou matched to the Lord? match in the Lord. How happy are such marriages where Christ is at the Wedding; Let none but those who have found favour in Gods eyes, finde favour in yours.

2. Give God the Tribute of your gratulation for your good companions. Take heed of paying your rent to a wrong Landlord. When you taste of the streame, reflect on the spring that feeds it. Now thou hast foure eyes for thy speculation, foure hands for thy operation, foure feet for thy ambulation, and foure shoulders for thy sustentation. What the sinne against the Holy Ghost is in point
of

of divinity, that is unthankfulness in point of morality; an offence unpardonable. Pity it is but that Moon should be ever in an Eclipse that will not acknowledge her beames to be borrowed from the Sunne. He that praises not the giver, prizes not the gift, and so I passe from the Agent to the Object, *a help.*

She must be so much, and no lesse, and so much, and no more. Our ribs were not ordained to be our Rulers. They are not made of the head to claim superiority, but out of the side to be content with equality. They desert the Author of nature, that invert the order of nature. The woman was made for the mans comfort, but the man was not made for the womans command. Those shoulders aspire too high, that content not themselves with a roome below their head. It's between a man
and

and his wife in the house, as it is between the Sunne and the Moone in the heavens, when the greater light goes down, the lesser light gets up; when the one ends in setting, the other beginnes in shining. The wife may be a Sovereaign in her husbands absence, but she must be subject in her husbands presence. As *Pharaoh* said to *Joseph*, so should the husband say to his wife, *Genesis* 41. 40. Thou shalt be over my house, and according to thy word shall all my people be ruled, onely in the Throne will I be greater than thou. The body of that Household can never make any good motion, whose bones are out of place. The Woman must be a helpe to the man in these foure things, To

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1. To his Piety.
2. To his Society.
3. To his Progenity.
4. To his Prosperity.

To his Piety by the ferventnesse of her excitation.

To his Society by the fragrantnesse of her conversation.

To his Progeny by the fruitfulnessse of her education.

To his Prosperity by the faithfulnessse of her preservation.

To his Piety by the ferventnesse of her excitation, *1 Pet. 3. 7.*

Husband and wife should be as the two milch-kine which were coupled together to carry the Arke of God; or as the two Cherubims that look't one upon another and both upon the Mercy-Seat; or as the two tables of

of stone, on each of which were engraven the Lawes of God. In some families married persons are like *Jeremiah's* two baskets of figges, one very good, the other very evil; or like fire and water, whilst the one is flaming in devotion, the other is freezing in corruption. There is a twofold hindrance of holinesse; first, of the right side; secondly, on the left; on the right side when the wife would run in Gods way, the husband will not let her go: when the fore-horse in a teame will not draw, he wrongs all the rest; when the General of an Army forbids a March, all the Souldiers stand still. Sometimes on the left; How did *Solomons* Idolatrous wives draw away his heart from heaven? A sinning wife was Satans first ladder, by which he scaled the walls of Paradise and took a way

way the Fort Royal of *Adams* heart from him. Thus she that should have been the helpe of his flesh, was the hurt of his Faith: His natures under-prop- per, becomes his graces under- miner; and she that should be a Crown on the head is a crosse on the shoulders. The wife is often to the husband as the ivy is to the oak, which drawes away his sap from him.

2. A help to his society by the fragrantnesse of her conver- sation.

Man is an affectionate crea- ture, now the womans behavi- our should be such towards the man, as to requite his affection by increasing his delectation. That the new-borne-love may not be blasted, as soon as it's bloffomed; that it may not be ruined before it be rooted. A Spouse should carry her selfe so
to

to her husband as not to disturb his love by her contentions, nor to destroy his love by her alienation. Husband and wife should be like two candles burning together, which makes the house more lightsome, or like two fragrant flowers bound up in one Nosegay that augments it's sweetnesse; or like two well tuned instruments, which sounding together, makes the more melodious musick. Husband and wife, what are they but as two springs meeting, and so joyning their streames that they make but one current? It's an unpleasing spectacle to view any Contention in this Conjunction.

3. To his Progeny by the fruitfulness of her education, that so her children in the flesh may be Gods children in the Spirit,

Spirit, I Samuel I. II. *Hanna* she vowes if the Lord will give her a Sonne by bearing him, she will returne that son to the Lord by serving him. A Spouse should be more careful of her childrens breeding, than she should be fearful of her childrens bearing. Take heede least these flowers grow in the Devils Garden. Though you bring them out in corruption, yet do not bring them up to damnation. Those are not Mothers, but Monsters, that whilst they should be teaching their children the way to heaven with their lips, are leading them the way to hell with their lives.

Good education is the best livery you can give them living, and it's the best Legacy you can leave them dying. You let out your cares to make them great,

O lift up your prayers to make
them good ; That before
you dye from them , you
may see Christ live in
them.

Whil'st these Twigges are
greene and tender, they should
be bowed towards God. Chil-
dren and Servants are in a Fa-
mily, as Passengers are in a Boat;
husband and wife they are as a
paire of Oares, to row them
to their desired Haven. Let
these small pieces of Timber be
hewed , and squared for the
Cælestial building. By putting
a Scepter of Grace into their
hands, you will set a Crown of glo-
ry upon their heads.

4. A helpe to his Prof-
perity by her faithful pre-
servation, being not a Wan-
drer abroad, but a Worker at
home.

One of the Antients speakes
C 2 excel-

excellently ; She must not be a Field-Wife like *Dinah* , nor a Street-Wife like *Thamar* , nor a Window-Wife like *Jezebel*.

Phideas when he drew a woman, painted her sitting under a Snail-shell, that she might imitate that little Creature that goes no further than it can carry it's house upon it's head.

How many women are there that are not labouring Bees , but idle Drones ; that take up a roome in the Hive , but bring no Honey to it ; that are Moths to their husbands Estates ; spending , when they should be sparing ? As the man's part is to provide industriously, so the womans is to preserve discreetly ; the one must not be carelessly wanting, the other must not be causelessly wasting :

waisting : the man must be seeking with diligence, the woman must be saving with providence. The Cock and the Hen both scrape together in the dust-heap to pick up something for their little chickens.

To winde up this on a short bottome.

I. If the Woman be a helpe to the man, then let not the man cast dirt on the Woman.

Secundus being asked his opinion of a Woman, speakes thus, *Viri naufragium domus tempestas, quietis impedimentum, &c.* But surely he was a Monster and not a man, fitter for a Tombe to bury him, than a wombe to beare him.

Some have stiled them to be,

C 3

Like

Like Clouds in the Sky.
 Like Motes in the Sun.
 Like Snuffs in the Candle.
 Like Weeds in the Garden.

It is not good to play the Butcher with that naked Sex that hath no armes but for imbraces. A Preacher should not be silent for those who are silenced from preaching ; because they are the weaker Vessels, shall they be broken all to pieces ? Thou that sayest women are evil, it may be thy expression flowes from thy experience ; but I shall never take that Mariner for my Pilot, that hath no better knowledge than the splitting of his own Ship. Wilt thou condemne the frame of all for the faults of one ? as if it were true Logick ; because
 some

some are evil, therefore none are good. He hath ill eyes that disdaines all objects. To blast thy helper, is to blame thy Maker. In a word, we took our rise from their bowels, and may take our rest in their bosomes.

2. Is the woman to be a helpe to the man? Then let the man be a helpe to the woman. What makes these Debtors be such ill Pay-Masters? but because they look at what is owing to them, but not at what is owing by them. If thou wouldst have thy wifes reverence, let her have thy respect. To force a feare from this relation, is that which neither befits the husbands authority to enioyne, nor the wifes duty to performe. A wife must not be sharply driven, but sweetly drawn. Compassion may

C 4 bend

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bend her, but compulsion will break her. Husband and Wife should act towards each other with consent, not by constraint.

There are foure things wherein the husband is to be a meet help to the wife.

1. In his protecting of her from injuries. It's well observed by one, that the rib, of which woman was made, was taken from under the mans arme: as the use of the arme is to keep off blowes from the body, so the office of the husband is to ward off blowes from the wife: The wife is the husbands Treasury, and the husband should be the wifes Armory. In darknesse he should be her Sun for direction; in danger he should be her shield for protection.

2. In his providing for her necessities.

necessities. The husband must communicate maintenance to the wife; as the head conveyes influence to the members; Thou must not be a Drone, and she a Drudge. A man in a married estate, is like a Chamberlaine in an Inne, there's knocking for him in every roome. Many persons in this condition, waste that estate in Luxury, which should supply their wives necessity. *Nec amor viget mariti, nec fides Christiani*, they have neither the faith of a Christian, nor the love of a husband. It's a sad spectacle to see a Virgin sold with her own money unto slavery, when Services are better than Marriages; the one recieves Wages, whilst the other buyes their Fetters.

3. In his covering of her infirmities. Who would trample upon

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upon a Jewel because it's fallen
 in the dirt? or throw away a
 heap of wheat, for a little
 chaffe? or despise a golden
 wedge, because it retaines some
 drosse? These Roses have their
 prickles. Now husbands should
 spread a mantle of charity over
 their wives infirmities. They
 be ill Birds that defile their own
 nests. It's a great deal better
 you should fast, than feast your
 selves upon their failings. Some
 husbands are never well, lon-
 ger than they are holding their
 fingers in their wives sores.
 Such are like Crowes, that
 fasten onely upon carrion. Do
 not put out the Candle, be-
 cause of the snuffe. If the gold
 be good, allow it *grains*. Hus-
 bands and wives should provoke
 one another to love, and they
 should love one another notwith-
 standing

standing of provocation. Take heed of poysoning those Springs, from whence the Streames of your Pleasure flowes.

4. By his delighting in her Society: A wife takes Sanctuary, not onely in her husbands house, but in his heart. The Tree of love should grow up in the Family, as the Tree of life grew up in the Garden. They that choose their love, should love their choice. They that marry where they affect not, will affect where they marry not. Two joyned together without love, are but two ty'd together, to make one another miserable. And so I passe to the last stage of the text; *a help meet;*

A helpe, there's her fulnesse;

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a meet help, there's her fitness.

The Angels were too much above him, the creatures were too much below him; he could not steppe up to the former, nor could he stoope down to the latter: The one was out of his reach, the other was out of his race: but the woman is a parallel line drawn equal with him: meet she must be in three things.

I. In the Harmony of her disposition. Husband and wife should be like the image in a looking-glasse that answers in all properties to the face that stands before it; or like an Eccho that returneth the voice it recieveth. Many marriages are like putting new wine into old bottles.

bottles. An old man is not a meet help for a young woman. He that sets a gray head upon greene shoulders, bath one foot in the Grave, and another in the Cradle. Yet how many times do you see the spring of youth, wedded to the winter of old age? A young person, is not a meet help for an old woman; raw flesh is but an ill plaister for rotten bones. He that in his non-age, marries another in her dote-age, his lust hath one wife in possession, but his love another in reversion.

2. In the Herauldry of her condition. Some of our European Nations, are so strict in their conjunctions, that it's against their Lawes, for the

Com-

Commonalty to couple with the Gentry.

It was well said by one: If the wife be too much above her husband, she either ruins him by her vast expences, or reviles him with her base reproaches: If she be too much below her husband, either her former condition makes her too generous, or her present mutation, makes her too imperious.

Marriages are stiled matches, yet amongst those many that are married, how few are there that are matched? Husbands and wives are like locks and keyes, that rather break than open, except the wards be answerable.

3. In the holinesse of her
Re-

Religion. If adultery may separate a marriage contracted, Idolatry may hinder a marriage not perfected. Cattle of diverse kinds were not to ingender, 2 Corinthians 6. 14. Be not unequally yoked, &c. It's dangerous taking her for a wife, who will not take God for a husband. It is not meet that one flesh should be of two spirits. Is there never a Tree thou likest in the Garden, but that which beares forbidden fruit? there are but two channels in which the remaining streames shall runne.

1. To those men that want wives, how to choose them.

2. To those women that have husbands, how to use them.

For

For the first: Marriage is the tying of such a knot, that nothing but death can unloose. Common reason suggests for much, that we should be long a doing that which can but once be done. Where one design hath been gravelled in the Sands of Delay, thousands have been split upon the Rock of Precipitance. Rash adventures yields little gaine. Opportunities are not like tides, that when one is past, another returns; but yet take heed of flying without your wings; you may breed such Agues in your bones, that may shake you to your graves.

Let me preserve you from a bad choice.

2. Present you with a good one.

First, to preserve you from a bad choice. Take that in three things.

1. Choose not for Beauty.

2. Choose not for Dowry.

3. Choose not for Dignity.

He that looks for beauty, buyes a picture.

He that loves for Dowry, makes a purchase.

He that leapes for Dignity, matches with a Multitude at once.

The first of these is too blind to be directed.

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The second, too base to be accepted.

The third, too bold to be respected.

1. Choose not by your eyes.

2. By your hands.

3. By your eares.

First, choose not by your eyes, looking at the beauty of the person. Not but that this is lovely in a woman, but that this is not all for which a woman should be beloved. He that had the choice of many faces, stampes this Character upon them all; favour is deceitful, and beauty is vaine. The Sunne is more bright in a cleare Sky, than when the Horizon is clouded. But if a womans flesh hath
more

more of beauty, than her spirit hath of Christianity; it's like poison in sweet-meates, most dangerous. *Genesis 6. 2.* *The sonnes of God saw the daughters of men that they were fair, &c.* One would have thought, that they should rather have look'd for grace in the heart, than for the beauty in the face. Take heed of Inning at the fairest signes. The Swan hath black flesh under her white feathers.

Secondly, Choose not by your hands, for the bounty of the portion.

When *Cato's* daughter was asked, why she did not marry, she thus reply'd; she could not find the man that loved her person above her portion.

portion. Men love curious pictures, but they would have them set in golden frames. Some are so degenerate, as to think any to be good enough; who have but goods enough. Take heed, for sometimes the bag and baggage go together. The person should be a figure, and the portion a Cypher, which added to her, advances the summe, but alone signifies nothing. When *Themistocles* was to marry his daughter, two Suitors courted her together, the one rich and a foole, the other wise, but poore; and being demanded which of the two he had rather his daughter should have, answered, *mallem virum sine pecunia, &c.* I had rather she should have a man without

out money, than money without
a man.

Thirdly, choose not by
your eares, for the dignity of
her parentage. A good old
stock may nourish a fruitlesse
branch. There are many chil-
dren who are not the blessings,
but the blemishes of their pa-
rents. They are nobly def-
cended, but ignobly minded.
Such was *Aurelius Antonius*, of
whom it was said, that he
injured his Country in nothing,
but in being the father of
such a childe. There are ma-
ny low in their descents, that
are high in their deserts. Such
was the Coblers sonne, who
grew to be a famous Cap-
taine; when a great person
upbraided the meannesse of his
original, my nobility (saith
he)

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he) begins with me, but thy nobility ends with thee. Piety is a greater honour than parentage. She is the best Gentlewoman that is heire of her own deserts, and not the degenerated off-spring of anothers vertue.

Secondly, to present you with a good choice; in three things.

1. Choose such a one as will be subject to your dominion. Take heed of yoking your selves with untamed Heifers.

2. Choose such a one as may sympathize with you in your affliction. Marriage is just like a Sea-Voyage, he that enters into this Ship, must look

look to meet with stormes
and tempests. 1 Corinthians 7.
28. *They that marry shall have
trouble in the flesh.* Flesh and
trouble are married together,
whether we marry or no,
now a bitter cup is too much
to be drunk by one mouth.
A heavy burden is easily car-
ried by the assistance of others
shoulders. Husband and wife
should neither be proud flesh,
nor dead flesh. You are fel-
low-Members, therefore should
have a fellow-feeling. While
one stands safe on the shore,
the other should pity him
that is tost on the Sea.
Sympathy in suffering, is
like a dry House in a wet
day.

3. Choose such a one as
may be serviceable to your
salvation.

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salvation. A man may think he hath a Saint, when he hath a Devil, but take heed of a Harlot that is false to thy bed, and of a hypocrite that is false to thy God.

Secondly : To those women that have Husbands, how to use them. In two things.

I. Carry your selves towards them with obedience. Let their power command you, that their praise may commend you. Though you may have your husbands hearts, yet you must not have their heads. As you will his love, so you should love his will. Till the husband leave commanding, the wife must never leave obeying. As his injunctions

injunctions must be lawfull,
 so her subjection must be loy-
 al.

2. With faithfulness. In
 Creation God made not one
 woman for many men, nor
 many women for one man :
 Every wife should be to her
 husband, as *Evah* was to *A-*
dam, a whole world of wo-
 men; and every husband should
 be to his wife, as *Adam*
 was to *Evah*, a whole world
 of men. When a river is divided
 into many channels, the main cur-
 rent starves.

To conclude : Good Ser-
 vants are a great blessing :
 good Children a greater bles-
 sing : but a good wife is
 the greatest blessing : and such
 a helpe let him seeke for
 her

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her that wants one let
 him sigh for her that hath
 lost one, let him take plea-
 sure in her that enjoys one.

*And the Lord God said, it is not
 good, &c.*

FINIS.

